

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 DHA-02 ORM-02 SCA-01 VO-03 INSE-00

OES-06 FBIE-00 SY-05 IO-13 /101 W

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R 210925Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2396

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 14178

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, JA

SUBJECT: GOJ STATEMENT ON MIG-25 DEFECTOR

REF: TOKYO 13925

SUMMARY. ON SEPTEMBER 20 JAPANESE HANDED SOVIETS WRITTEN STATEMENT REBUTTING SOVIET POSITION ON MIG 25 DEFECTOR POINT BY POINT. GOJ STATED BELENKO HAD SOUGHT ASYLUM IN US OF HIS OWN FREE WILL, THAT JAPANESE HAD ARRANGED SOVIET ACCESS TO BELENKO DESPITE HIS EXPRESS WISHES TO CONTRARY, THAT JAPAN NOT SUBJECT TO INTERFERENCE FROM ANY THIRD COUNTRY ON HANDLING OF PLANE, AND THAT GOJ WOULD TAKE MEASURES IT DEEMED NECESSARY TO EXAMINE AIRCRAFT INVOLVED IN VIOLATION OF JAPANESE AIRSPACE.

FONOFF BELIEVES THAT SOVIET TEMPERS HAVE COOLED SOMEWHAT ON MIG-25 ISSUE AND THAT DEFECTION WILL HAVE NO LASTING EFFECT ON JAPAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. AT SAME TIME JAPANESE BELIEVE THAT SOME SOVIET GESTURE OF DISPLEASURE WITH GOJ HANDLING OF AFFAIR WILL BE FORTHCOMING, PROBABLY IN FISHERIES AREA. END SUMMARY.

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(BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED)

1. EUROPEAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DEPDIRGEN KIUCHI CALLED IN SOVIET COUNSELOR DENISOV SEPTEMBER 20 AND HANDED HIM FOLLOWING STATEMENT: QUOTE.

WITH RESPECT TO THE POINTS MENTIONED IN THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT ADDRESSED TO THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WITH THE DATE OF SEPTEMBER 9, 1976, THE JAPANESE SIDE HAS ALREADY REPEATEDLY CONVEYED ITS VIEWS TO THE SOVIET SIDE BUT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT DESIRES TO REITERATE ITS POSITION AS FOLLOWS:

A. AS HAS ALREADY BEEN CONVEYED TO THE SOVIET SIDE, LIEUTENANT V. I. BELENKO WISHED TO SEEK ASYLUM IN THE UNITED STATES AT HIS FREELY EXPRESSED WILL. THIS BEING ACCEPTED, HE WAS ALLOWED TO DEPART FOR THE UNITED STATES ON SEPTEMBER 9. THERE IS NOT TRUTH IN THE SOVIET ALLEGATION TO THE EFFECT THAT VIOLENCE AND OTHER COERCIVE METHODS HAD BEEN USED IN AN ATTEMPT TO PREVENT HIS RETURN TO HIS HOMELAND, AND THE ACCUSATIONS MADE IN THE ABOVE-REFERRED SOVIET STATEMENT ARE COMPLETELY GROUNDLESS.

B. LIEUTENANT BELENKO WAS PROTECTED BY THE JAPANESE AUTHORITIES ON HIS OWN FREELY EXPRESSED WILL. HE DID NOT WANT TO MEET, AT ALL, ANY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, THE JAPANESE SIDE, TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE STRONG DESIRE OF THE SOVIET SIDE, PERSUADED HIM AND ARRANGED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR HIM TO MEET AN OFFICIAL OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY. THERE WAS NO VIOLATION OF THE JAPAN-SOVIET CONSULAR TREATY BY THE JAPANESE SIDE.

C. IN CASE A PERSON SOUGHT ASYLUM IN A THIRD COUNTRY ON HIS OWN FREELY EXPRESSED WILL, IT HAS BEEN THE POSITION OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT TO RESPECT IT AS HAS REPEATEDLY BEEN STATED TO THE SOVIET SIDE. THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WISHES TO ASSERT, ON THIS OCCASION, THAT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR INTERFERENCE BY ANY THIRD COUNTRY. WHETHER SUCH A DESIRE OF THE PERSON IN QUESTION IS ACCEPTED OR REJECTED IS A MATTER ENTIRELY UP TO THE THIRD COUNTRY CONCERNED.

D. THE INCIDENT, IN WHICH A FIGHTER PLANE BELONGING TO THE AIR DEFENSE FORCE OF THE SOVIET UNION HAS VIOLATED CONFIDENTIAL

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JAPAN'S AIR SPACE AND HAS MADE A FORCED LANDING ON A CIVILIAN AIRPORT OF JAPAN BY CAUSING DAMAGE TO THE AIRPORT FACILITIES, HARBORS SUSPICION OF HAVING VIOLATED THE SECURITY OF JAPAN. ACCORDINGLY, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WISHES TO ADD THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TAKING MEASURES AS DEEMED NECESSARY REGARDING THE AIRPLANE IN QUESTION.

E. THE JAPANESE SIDE IS CONFIDENT THAT THE

SOVIET SIDE CORRECTLY UNDERSTANDS THE FUNDAMENTAL NATURE
OF THE INCIDENT AS STATED ABOVE. UNQUOTE. (END UNCLASSIFIED)

2. ACCORDING TO FIRST EAST EUROPEAN DIVDIR
TOGO, DENISOV PROMISED TO REFER STATEMENT IMMEDIATELY
TO HIS SUPERVISORS. HE EXPRESSED HIS PRIVATE VIEW THAT
PLANE BEING DISMANTLED UNDER PRESSURE FROM THIRD
COUNTRY. KIUCHI DENIED THIS AND ADDED THAT DENISOV'S
REMARK WAS INAPPROPRIATE. BOTH STATEMENT AND
CONVERSATION GIVEN WIDE PRESS COVERAGE.

3. COMMENTING ON SOVIET HANDLING OF CASE, TOGO SAID
THAT ORIGINAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN DEPFONMIN ARITA AND
AMBASSADOR POLYANSKY (REFTEL) HAD BEEN QUITE HEATED
AT TIMES. SOVIETS APPEARED TO HAVE COOLED DOWN
SOMEWHAT SINCE BELENKO LEFT AND ARE NOW MORE
MEASURED IN THEIR APPROACH TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE
ALTHOUGH THEIR POSITION REMAINED UNCHANGED. PATTERN OF
BEHAVIOR HAS BEEN SIMILAR TO OTHER CASES WHICH WHERE
JAPANESE HANDLING HAD NOT BEEN TO THEIR LIKING, MOST
RECENTLY THE MACHEKHIM SPY AFFAIR. TOGO SAID HE DID NOT
EXPECT THE DEFECTION TO HAVE A LASTING EFFECT ON
JAPAN-SOVIET RELATIONS, ALTHOUGH SOVIETS WOULD KEEP
UP PRESSURE UNTIL PLANE RETURNED. SOME SOVIET
GESTURE OF DISPLEASURE WITH GOJ SEEMED LIKELY, EITHER
IN FORM OF HARDENED POSITION ON NORTHERN TERRITORIES
OR MORE SPECIFICALLY ON FISHERIES ISSUE, WHERE MOSCOW
HAS MOST DIRECT LEVERAGE. TOGO EXPECTED THAT FONMINS
GROMYKO AND KOSAKA WOULD MEET IN NEW YORK SOMETIME
BETWEEN OCTOBER 6-8, THOUGH EXACT TIMING STILL
UNCONFIRMED.

4. DOMESTIC REACTION TO GOJ HANDLING OF MIG-25
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REMAINS LOW KEY. GENERAL COUNCIL OF JAPAN
TRADE UNIONS (SOHYO), HOWEVER PUBLISHED STATEMENT
SEPTEMBER 20 CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE RETURN OF PLANE TO
USSR, AND GOVERNOR OF IBARAKI PREFECTURE, WHERE HYAKURI
AIR BASE LOCATED, ISSUED STATEMENT EXPRESSING
SYMPATHY WITH RESIDENTS OF TOWN NEAR BASE WHO HAVE
OBJECTED TO TRANSPORT OF MIG THERE FOR INSPECTION ON
GROUND THEY WISHED TO AVOID ATTENDANT POLITICAL
DISTURBANCE.
HODGSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL ASYLUM, MILITARY AIRCRAFT, FOREIGN RELATIONS, AIRCRAFT PILOTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TOKYO14178
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760357-0053
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760935/aaaabdrw.tel
Line Count: 164
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TOKYO 13925
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <09 SEP 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOJ STATEMENT ON MIG-25 DEFECTOR
TAGS: PFOR, UR, JA, US, (BELENKO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006